



NFHS TOPIC SELECTION MEETING

The Westin Austin Downtown
Austin, Texas
July 31 – August 3, 2025
(All times in CENTRAL Time)

DEBATABILITY ROUNDTABLES

Friday, August 1: 9:45am-12:15pm

GENERAL INFORMATION

Debatability roundtables are designed to give attendees time to ask authors questions about their topics. These questions should be constructive and focused on the paper-writing criteria published in the [2025 Policy Debate Topic Selection Handbook](#).

Attendees will be divided into groups in several meeting rooms, and authors will rotate between groups. With 15 different topic paper submissions, rotations will occur every eight minutes.

Please [use this link to review topic papers](#) in advance of these roundtable discussions.

ROUNDTABLE SCHEDULE

Group #1 (9:45 – 10:30am)

- Mass Transit
- Corporate Control
- Food Subsidies
- Labor
- FDA Regulations

Group #2 (10:35 – 11:20am)

- Communicable Diseases
- Infrastructure
- Nuclear Weapons
- Voting and Election Reform
- Carbon Pricing

Group #3 (11:25am – 12:10pm)

- Individuals Over 65
- Energy
- Executive Power
- Healthcare
- Disability

GUIDANCE FOR QUESTIONS

Below, please find a general guide for the types of questions that you should be asking the authors during your short time with them. Please remember that these sessions are meant to be constructive and helpful to the authors.

Resolutions:

- Are there an appropriate number of potential resolutions that can be debated?
- Do you think some of the resolutions are too broad or too narrow?

Timeliness:

- Do you think this will be a timely topic during the 2026-2027 school year?
- What evidence do you have that this topic will still appear in the media in 2 years?
- Is there any chance that this topic will be rendered meaningless by the time the debates occur?
- Will this topic have new issues that arise as the topic is debated?



NFHS TOPIC SELECTION MEETING

The Westin Austin Downtown
Austin, Texas
July 31 – August 3, 2025
(All times in CENTRAL Time)

Scope:

- Does this topic address an issue that is significant in all areas of the country?
- Do you think a wide majority of states would be able to debate this topic?
- Are there any groups of people who would not be allowed to debate this topic?

Range:

- Will this topic challenge advanced debaters?
- Can this topic be understood and debated by novice debaters?

Quality:

- Do we want the nation's high school students to be researching and debating this topic?
- Will this topic provide value to high school students (exposure to divergent points of view, analyzes significant current issues/problems, opportunity to develop analytical and problem-solving skills)?
- Can this topic be debated for an entire year without producing repetitive debates?

Material:

- Is there enough material available on this topic?
- Is the material available accessible to all audiences?

Interest:

- Will this topic interest high school debaters, judges, and community members?
- Could there be a barrier to someone being interested in this topic?

Balance:

- Are there issues and arguments supporting both sides of the topic?
- Does either side have a significant advantage over the other side?
- Do both balanced affirmed and negative ground exist?

Things to *NOT* Do or Say

- Personally attack the author
- Give your personal opinion on how you would have authored the paper differently
- Compare someone else's paper to the topic being discussed
- Go on a long rant/monologue
- Make the roundtable about yourself instead of the topic